DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 478 741 EA 032 645

AUTHOR	Gregory, Sheila T.
TITLE	Leadership Styles and Characteristics of Effective Principals in High-Poverty Public Schools.
PUB DATE	2003-04-23
NOTE	14p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Chicago, IL, April 21-25, 2003).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS
DESCRIPTORS	*Administrator Characteristics; *Administrator Effectiveness; Administrators; Disadvantaged Schools; Elementary Secondary Education; *Instructional Leadership; Leaders; Leadership; Leadership Qualities; *Leadership Styles; Principals; Public Schools; Women Administrators
IDENTIFIERS	*Detroit Public Schools MI

ABSTRACT

This report describes a study in progress of principals' perceptions of leadership styles and characteristic in creating success in three high-poverty Detroit public schools. The data sources of the study were based on three effective, seasoned principals. All the principals are African American women and had at least 10 years of tenure at their current respective public schools. Each principal had been individually identified as an exemplary administrator through districtwide, regional, or national awards. Through the use of surveys, semistructured interviews, observations, and shadowing, the study viewed effective-schools research as the conceptual model undergirding the measurement of principal leadership. The principals and three teachers from each of the three schools completed an initial background survey. Each principal and teacher was also given an individual semiformal recorded face-to-face interview before and after the researcher's observations. Every attempt was made to observe each principal at varying times and days through the school week. Also, sufficient time was provided for principals to reflect on their leadership styles and behaviors and how they empower their teachers to become more effective. A qualitative thematic process was utilized to both organize and categorize the interview responses to identify and isolate common themes. (Author)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 478 741

Leadership Styles and Characteristics of Effective Principals in High-Poverty Public Schools.

Sheila T. Gregory

April 23, 2003

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✔ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

S. Gregory

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

CH 032 645

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Leadership Styles and Characteristics of Effective Principals in High-Poverty Public Schools

American Educational Research Association
Chicago, IL
April 23, 2003
12:25 p.m. – 1:55 p.m.
Hyatt Hotel, Skyway 265, East Tower, Blue Level

Sheila T. Gregory, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Higher Education and Educational Leadership
Clark Atlanta University
James P. Brawley Drive, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30314
Phone: (404) 880-6642
Email: drsgregory@aol.com

EA 032645

Leadership Styles and Characteristics of Effective Principals in High-Poverty K-12 Public Schools

ABSTRACT

Across the nation, urban schools are in a state of crisis. The day-to-day realities of educating economically disadvantaged students in urban school districts have become increasingly challenging. At this critical juncture, however, the National Association of Elementary School Principals estimates that more than 40 percent of principals will retire or leave their positions during the next 10 years. As the need for urban principals with strong leadership abilities increases, the pool of qualified candidates decreases, especially in urban districts.

This paper, which is a work in progress, examines principals' perceptions of leadership styles and characteristics in creating success in three high-poverty Detroit public schools, one of each elementary, middle, and high school. The data sources of this study were based on three effective, seasoned principals in these schools. All of the principals had at least ten years of tenure at their current, respective public school and were, coincidentally, all African American women. Each principal had been individually identified as "exemplary" administrators through district-wide, regional or national awards. Schools are identified as "successful or effective schools," as measured by the standards-based criteria of the Michigan Education Assessment Program (MEAP) and national recognition. Through the use of surveys, semi-structured interviews, observations and shadowing, this paper views effective schools research as the conceptual model under-girding the measurement of principal leadership.

In terms of process, the principals and three teachers from each of the three schools completed an initial background survey and consent form the week prior to the first set of observations. Each principal and teacher was also given an individual, semi-formal, recorded face-to-face interview of approximately two hours in length, before and after the researcher's observations. Finally, the researcher observed each principal for six, three-hour periods during the spring 2002 academic year. Every attempt was made to observe each principal at varying times and days throughout the school week to capture different experiences and interactions with teachers, staff, students, parents, and others. Also, sufficient time was provided for principals to reflect on their leadership styles and behaviors and how they empower their teachers to become more effective. A qualitative thematic process was utilized to both organize and categorize the interview responses of principals and teachers to identify and isolate common themes.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this paper are to examine the leadership qualities and characteristics using qualitative measures. Specifically, this research will address the following questions:

1) What are the leadership styles and characteristics of effective principals in this study?
2) What are the major challenges faced by urban school principals?
3) Who and what brings school principal's joy?
4) How can principals empower teachers to become more effective educators?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK/ METHODOLOGY

To adequately meet daily challenges, schools need principals who are effective leaders and empowering change agents. Leithwood (1994) and Leithwood and Jantzi (1994) have explained various approaches to improve school leadership by examining the several dimensions of transformational leadership which will be the framework used to portray effective school leadership.

Based on early effective schools research of the 1970s and 1980s, strong administrative leadership was shown to relate directly to school improvement, increased student learning (Edmonds, 1979; Fullan, 1982) and organizational school effectiveness (Miskel and Hoy, 2001). Although just a few recent research studies have indicated a direct relationship between principal leadership and academic achievement (Hallinger, Blickman and Davis, 1996), there is a consensus that a principal can have an indirect effect on academic achievement through actions that shape the school's learning environment (Creighton, 1996). Early schools research focused primarily on comparisons between "effective" and "ineffective" schools, however more recent works have included greater numbers of schools in mixed-model school effectiveness studies (Levine and Lezotte, 1996; Stringfield and Herman, 1996). This paper examines effective schools research and the ability of principals to positively impact student academic success through a conceptual model composed of two research theories and three instruments. The first is Leadership Theory, which was assessed through two instruments: A 36-item principal self-assessment and a survey completed by three teachers in the respective schools on the leadership and characteristics of the principals. Each of these instruments were based on Leithwood and Jantzi's new Transformational Leadership Instrument, which is composed of six main characteristics including: building school vision and goals, providing intellectual stimulation, offering individualized support, symbolizing professional practices and values, demonstrating high performance expectations, and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions. The second theory from school effectiveness research, utilized Miskel's updated Index of Perceived Organizational Effectiveness for Schools (2001)--an 8-item measure, 5-scale instrument --which was employed to identify characteristics and measure actions and efforts that contribute to school and principal effectiveness. This instrument was completed by the principals and three tenured teachers in each respective school. In addition, the researcher relied heavily on transcribed tapes from one-on-one principal and teacher interviews, notes from observations and shadowing, and to a lesser degree from state-wide school assessments, student's standardized test results, school improvement plans, and document analysis of other related materials which formed the empirical basis for this paper.

INTRODUCTION

The Detroit Public Schools (DPS) System is the largest district in Michigan. Located in the 10th largest city in the nation, DPS has a K-12 enrollment of over 162,000 students who are served in 170 elementary schools, 44 middle schools, and 27 high schools. In the past five years, the District's K-12 student enrollment has gone from 174,000 to a current enrollment of 162,000, a 6.73 percent reduction. This has resulted in lowered

public perception of the quality of education provided by DPS and has decreased per pupil funding. Increased class size along with increasing teacher retirements and waning interest in the teaching profession, present major challenges in attracting and retaining a sufficient supply of certified teachers to meet needs not only in Detroit, but throughout the nation. Data on America's aging teaching force—and their impending retirement—is mirrored in Detroit's statistics. The median age of teachers in the district is 51 and the system anticipates large numbers of retirements in the next five years. Teacher employment opportunities for 2001-2002 identified a critical shortage in a number of academic areas, but especially in mathematics and science. Of the district's nearly 1,000 vacancies, 623 are concentrated in mathematics, science and special education, with only two teachers holding an endorsement in chemistry and physics.

In 2001, the State of Michigan took over the Detroit Public School (DPS) System and the City of Detroit reorganized in an effort to improve the quality of student performance by appointing a CEO to run the Detroit Public School System. The then new, 31-year-old Mayor, Kwame Kilpatrick, who had been a Detroit Public School teacher himself, stated his commitment to improving the DPS. Plans have been underway to identify what leadership and administrative qualities are required for effective Detroit school principals. Just this past December, nearly two dozen DPS principals were relieved of their duties because their schools were deemed ineffective. Since January of this year, there has been a call on many levels for effective school leadership.

LEADERSHIP STYLES AND CHARACTERISTICS

During the past decade, principals have undertaken fundamental changes in their professional roles, which have brought about a shift in the philosophy that dominated the field of educational leadership. As Leithwood (1994) has articulated, in the 1980s and 1990s the principal's role was to be the instructional leader, which was crafted and driven by the needs and expectations of the public. However, the 1990s brought about greater accountability and demanded that the principal not solely function as the instructional leader, but also become a visionary leader, using a wide range of mechanisms to motivate and create change in their schools. An earlier study by Leithwood and Jantzi (1990) on transformational leadership showed that school principals were most successful when they implemented numerous activities to motivate their teachers and staff to bring about changes within the school environment.

Burns (1978) refers to transformational leaders as those leaders inspiring followers to achieve "higher levels of morality and motivation" (p. 20). The role of the traditional was to maintain the 'status quo' by meeting the needs of his or her followers. Shins (1994) describes transformational leadership as those "bonds leader and followers within a collaborative change process" (p. 274) develop, which in turn contributes to the performance of the entire organization or school. Today, principals have been characterized as those who must be transformational leaders, change agents, school problem finders and problem solvers, collaborative decision makers, decentralized leaders, and expert instructional leaders in teaching and learning (Clark & Clark, 1994; Hallinger, 1992; Jackson & Davis, 2000: Leithwood, 1992). Therefore, the commitment and implementation of strategies, rather than the control of strategies, become more

critical skills for school principals. In today's reform climate, it would be difficult to disagree with the need for principals to act as transformational and instructional leaders (Leithwood, et al., 1998) in ways that create positive learning environments for students and teachers (Fullan, 1997), however, as Fullan (1997) has noted, available theories often lack guidance for practitioners when they are faced with unpredictable and context-specific situations in their professional lives. Therefore, more research is needed to suggest some examples of implications for practice.

In this study, each of the three African American women principals provided clear evidence in their self-assessments and interviews that they perceived themselves as conscientiously, collectively and consistently working towards the goals and vision of their respective schools, providing opportunities for professional development of staff and teachers, holding high expectations for students and teachers, and working hard to encourage more participation from staff and teachers in the decision making process in the school and written input on deliberations of issues which face the community and school districts. They also self-identified their leadership styles to be more transformational than transactional. Teachers, for the most part, concurred with these principal perceptions, but not with regard to the methods used or the frequency of opportunities.

For example, more than half of the teachers contended that while professional development was encouraged, teachers who sought out additional professional activities (other than the teacher in-service workshop and seminars which are usually selected by a committee composed of teachers and administrators, often with topics assigned by the district as a means of getting teachers to by into a new application, academic program, teaching method) were not afforded school release time, teacher substitutes, or financial support to attend such activities. One school, however, was quite successful at obtaining grants, and actually had a pot of money designated for teachers who were presenting at conferences or wanted to attend local professional development workshops or seminars.

Teachers in all three schools felt very involved in the decision making process, typically described as self-selected and open school committees where 'anyone can have their say, but no one person will have their way.' According to teachers, each of the three principals in this study worked hard to create a supportive and trusting work environment, which aligns with the described effects of transformational leadership offered by Leithwood and Jantzi (1999). Furthermore, when asked about the school climate created by principals, every teacher responded that they felt comfortable going to the principal with a problem or concern. In each principal's report, it was apparent that all three set high standards for themselves and their teachers. In several of the teacher interviews, respondents spoke about the care and concern displayed by the principal and fellow teachers, which was apparently a direct result of the climate created by the principals. For example, one master teacher (who spends half his day training and observing new teachers and the other half teaching English and literature in a high school) said:

> She is a very caring and mindful principal. There is a humanistic quality, caring and being mindful of the situation. Having a perspective that really challenges, not only the kids, but because a lot of times people are not really self-reflective. And that is a characteristic that you have to have as an educator. If you can't see yourself in relationship to what is going on in your academic career, your

> professional life, and the lives of the students, you can't reach them. It will be impossible.

Another 26-year veteran teacher stated that her principal in just two years, created a very effective learning environment by encouraging teachers to be creative in the classroom and use teaching practices that work well with their students, rather than what the district or others condone as the latest practice. When asked to explain whether she felt her principal was effective and why, she stated:

> I believe that she is a very effective principal and a strong educator. She is very familiar with the basic philosophy of most curriculums and she closely monitors the performance of out students. She also has been known to come into classrooms unannounced to just observe and sometimes joins in to teach a lesson. Although a few of my colleagues would prefer she let them know first, most are receptive and encourage her to drop in when she can.

According to the leadership and organizational effectiveness instruments completed by both principals and teachers, all indicators ranging from administrators knowledge, communications, leadership, instructional support, evaluation, planning, community involvement and activities, disciplinary procedures, climate, facilities, decision-making, day-to-day management and other indicators, each of the three principals were rated very highly in all areas except for a few which were solely reported by teachers. For example, three of the nine teachers did not feel, to varying degrees, that the school plan was developed with the input of all teachers, or that community resources were used well to support the school. One 6-year science teacher was very critical with regard to the lack of input from non-committee members in the school planning, budget, school policy and procedures, and input in student disciplinary decisions. He actually wrote several sentences in the margins between questions throughout the survey to elaborate his viewpoints. However, his negative perceptions were not heard from other teacher participants in this study.

Other preliminary results of the study indicated all principals were successful in fostering an accepting and nurturing climate for their staff and teachers, which carried over into the classrooms, providing a learner-centered environment. Because the principals held high expectations of the teachers, they in turn held high aspirations for their students. The questionnaires, however, also indicated the existence of problems in establishing and maintaining effective relationships with central administration, which is unfortunately a common problem for urban school districts competing for limited funding. While all three principals had served in their current roles for over a decade, surprisingly the leadership attributes and strengths self-identified by principals appeared to become more effective as principals became more tenured. Overall, there was a clear pattern that high achieving principals perceive themselves as participatory leaders whom other staff and teachers felt comfortable consulting with on a regular basis, which helped to foster a collaborative working environment and teacher empowerment.

JOB SATISFACTION AND MAJOR CHALLENGES

In this study, principals were given numerous opportunities to identity and express their concerns about job satisfaction. In the demographic survey, all three principals rated their

current job satisfaction as high or very high on a 5-point scale, very high being one and high being two. When asked what was most important to their job satisfaction responses varied tremendously. The most senior principal with over 30 years of administrative experience ranked high student expectations as most important to her job satisfaction, followed by a supportive climate, her sense of accomplishment, and her relationships with students respectively. The second principal with 13 years of administrative experience ranked the quality of work life as most important to her job satisfaction, followed by job security, sense of accomplishment, and relationship with students. The third principal, with 15 years tenure, ranked sense of accomplishment as most important to her job satisfaction, followed by a supportive climate, personal creativity, and personal autonomy. Furthermore, they all rated their current principalship as extremely demanding (1 on a scale from 1-5) of their time, energy and concern.

Given this foundation, the study sought determine which professional challenges appeared to be the greatest for these effective urban school principals and how they apparently negotiated them to maintain their extremely high rates of job satisfaction, which is certainly not supported by current published research in the field of educational administration. As stated earlier, many vehicles were used to reveal the challenges faced by these women. Direct questions were asked on the initial survey, several semi-formal questions requiring examples were posed during the face-to-face interviews, detailed notes were taken during observations (just recording with no interaction) and shadowing (accompanying subjects throughout the day and dialoguing often), and teacher perceptions were considered as well.

All of the principals stated that there was no time in the day, week, month or year to get all of the work done, so the need to organize and prioritize, delegate, and secure good, competent staff and secretarial assistance were critical. Each principal stated that at least one of these important needs was not met. One principal said that her two assistant principals had been taken away because of budget cuts and even though she had been promised to get at least one back, three years later this had not occurred. Other important, unfilled staff positions mentioned by the principals included curriculum leaders, security guards, and certified teachers in several disciplines. None of the principals felt they had a competent or reliable secretary, and all expressed the difficulty of terminating them due to disciplinary procedures or outright fear that if they are fired, the district would not replace them due to perceived budget constraints. For example, one principal said:

> I think if I could find this dream secretary so that I know where everything is, someone who could file and do all the things to help keep me organized, I would be a better principal. I have never been fortunate to have a secretary like that. Without my computer, I would not be able to survive because I do my own secretarial work. And that's been ten years..... And if I should slip up for example, I had been out of town to the Principal's Institute in San Diego. I returned Monday. Well, my secretary had received a call last week Friday. Tuesday morning when I went in, I discovered that the fax machine did not have paper. I put paper in the fax machine and found out I had missed the general principal's meeting for Monday at ten o'clock. Even though I had seen people throughout the day and they had spoken to me, no one passed that information

> along. I'm used to it, so I normally have my palm pilot, but it's frustrating if I do not get the information.

In one of the schools, there had been a gang shooting of a student. It was technically off school grounds, but just on the other side of the school parking lot. While there were security guards and security detectors at each of the school entrances and exits, there were no security guards on school grounds outside of the building. The principal also stated that safety was her primary challenge. She believed that if her students knew they were safe traveling to and from school and while in school, they would learn better because there would be no fear.

One educator expressed her concern:

> You know we have gangs who are competing for our children. And they are showing them a little love. And that is what keeps them loyal. You know, they may not get it at home. They may not get it at church. And if they don't get it here, the streets are going to take them. And so I was using that example with the staff when I first came to this school, but some people got offended by it. I said, "then if you are offended by it, then that means I am speaking of you." And so that was one of the greatest challenges; just being able to put that aside and still not alter who I am because some people are upset with me.

Another principal indicated that learning how to deal with parents is often her greatest challenge. She explains:

> I never had problems with the curriculum... It's dealing with the parents and knowing how to deal with situations. I think what I have found over the years, a few ground rules: be honest, be frank, upfront, and don't hide stuff. Whatever it is, face it. A teacher has made a mistake, or whatever it is. As long as you are trying to work it out and do what is best for the student or the school, then parents will go along with you. And there is a way to handle the angry ones: stop and listen. That is usually all they want is to have somebody to listen to them. Then after you have met them on an adult level--one adult talking to another adult—well... A principal talking to a parent, on the same level, they appreciate that. When you admit mistakes, whether you made them, they made them, or teachers made them, we are going to correct it and move on. I have found it is better to meet things head on, immediately.

Another aspect of the principalship that all three women clearly identified was having to leave the building for meetings which were usually unproductive or could have been handled by phone, mail, or email. For example, one participant stated:

> It just seems like they make you come out of the building for all these meetings because they have the power to do it. But I get very little out of the meetings. It just seems like so many of them are just a waste of time.

Student achievement was another challenge voiced by all three principals. One principal argued that:

> It is a tremendous challenge to teach the students in such a way that their true knowledge and capabilities are evident in the standardized test. I think my children would achieve if they were measured differently.

JOY IN THE PRINCIPALSHIP

In the research I conduct, I think it is important to recognize and highlight the more positive aspects of an issue. In this study, I wanted to know what brings these principals joy in their day-to-day professional lives. This was important not only to reflect the advantages of the principalship, but also to help explain the high levels of self-assessed job satisfaction confirmed by each of these effective urban school principals.

As expected, all of the principal participants identified relationships with the students as high on their list of joys. For example, one principal said:

> When I can get out among the kids, that brings me a lot of joy. Whenever I can get into a classroom, which is not as often as I like, I will just go in and sit down, you know, and just participate in the lesson. That is what I like to do, but only get a chance to get into the classrooms about 3 times a week.

Another principal said,

> Believe it or not, I would tell you this is not rhetoric. This is the truth. If those kids were not in the building, I wouldn't walk in here. And I build it into my daily life or it builds itself into my daily life. Two of my eight regular children came in today. They wanted to give me something to sign. And they walked out. About a minute later they came back in to hug me and ask me what was the matter. I didn't realize that whatever was wrong with me, was showing on my face. And so it builds into my daily life, in the sense that I can get some joy and perspective from them.

The most senior principal passionately stated:

> I get tremendous joy from my students. When I walk down the hall and they come up to hug me, that gives me great joy. I get great joy from my athletes especially. When I can stand and talk to them about what's really going on; who's playing, who's doing what, who did well last night, and who didn't, they think that it is absolutely fantastic that this little old lady knows about you and those kind of things. So they really know that I care about them, and care about their concerns. That's where I get my joy. And when I see them successful. They graduate and come back to give me a hug.

She continued:

> The first thing in the morning, nearly every morning, I will stand near the entryway and say good morning to the students. If I have a meeting or something of course I can not. But I try to be there almost every morning. I am at that area. And that says a lot. It says to the students, "I'm here, I am available to you, I am concerned about you, I'm glad to see you, have a good day. If you come in with your hat on I signal to you to get your hat off." And some students come in, you know they've been on the bus, and they need to get up. I'll say "Wake up. You know, Get up. It's not that bad." Or something similar to that. So that's my great joy. Being able to stand there and greet those young people when they come in the morning.

Other responses to what brought principals joy were not as obvious. One principal said:

> It just seems that my day gets shot to pieces so often. I do enjoy staff meetings to tell you the truth. I enjoy interacting with the staff. I enjoy them giving me their opinions... This is my time too. It's more than just a staff meeting. It's my time to.... connect with them, find out what is going on. I think that they enjoy and appreciate that I try and share with them and give them information that they may not get other ways. So I guess that is.... a high point when I can connect to the staff.

When asked the highlight of one principal's year, she responded:

> The highlight of the year is the Principal's Breakfast we have each year around Valentine's Day. And this year we had about 400 students who maintained a 3.0 or better on a 4-point scale for the first semester. And we invite those students and one parent to breakfast. The cafeteria was packed and that was a tremendous highlight. When we first started this, we could accommodate everyone very easily, but each year it grows and grows. And of course, also, graduation is a very special time for me. To see the students that you have mentored, supported, corralled, and everything.... finally get that diploma. To walk across that stage. It's very moving to me. So, graduation is a special time too.

EMPOWERING EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

In this study, the leadership styles and behaviors of the principals had a direct impact on teachers' perceptions of their work. For example, the more collaborative the principals were in the day-to-day decision making process, particularly on issues directly related to instruction, the more teachers reported feeling empowered. Three teachers mentioned that their principals respected them as professionals and support them 100% as long as they could justify that their actions were in the best interests of the students and they were, for the most part, following policy. One older primary teacher stated that the principal often asks her opinion when an important decision must be made that directly impacts her classroom or students. One younger middle school teacher talked about how motivated she became when she met individually with the principal about an unrelated matter. She said, the principal is "so high energy, her enthusiasm is contagious." As a point of reference, the principal in question is very multi-task oriented. In the third month I was shadowing and observing her, I witnessed her carrying on two successfully productive meetings simultaneously (one on speaker phone and another with her immediate staff) while assisting three detention students who were seated at the small table just to the right of her desk in her office. During these meetings, she also took time out to speak to one parent, and later, the superintendent's office on another line. The principal seemed very comfortable during this entire morning and managed the day as if it were no problem at all.

When principals are perceived as being supportive of their staff and open for comments, teachers feel empowered to make choices and decisions on their own regarding classroom matters. Teachers in this study were much more apt to make recommendations or offer constructive criticism when their views were less than popular. Specifically, they reported feeling as though the principal hired them for their competence and trusted them

to be the experts, both inside and outside the classroom, without the interference of micromanagement on the part of the principal or her staff. In addition, several teachers stated that the vision for the school was clear and whenever other colleagues challenged their views or opinions, they could directly link their actions, intended or realized, back to the school's vision and goals. Teachers actually reported working much harder, as professionals and as caregivers for the children, because they truly felt vested in the lives of the children through their efforts, care and concern. The principal's directly empowered teachers by providing an open and trusting school climate which nurtured teachers to make decisions and feel confident that the principal would be supportive of them and their efforts.

All three principals in this study felt that their work was truly meaningful and that they were making a difference in, not only the lives of the children and school, but in the lives of the surrounding community. After reviewing many teacher evaluations, I noted that the principals had observed nearly every teacher at least once, but mostly twice each year. In addition, detailed, comprehensive feedback was given and comments on the feedback were encouraged from teachers and documented in their files.

When asked how principals can empower teachers, the master teacher replied:

> Principals should empower teachers to take on leadership roles because that is where the changes are going to come. The classroom, yes, we all love our kids, but when you get a chance to work around other professionals, you learn a lot. Because you realize that not everybody is on the same page. Everyone does not have a desire to help kids. And when you see that, it makes you work harder in the classroom, because now you know you are trying to compensate for something that.... is going to be lacking. So when students have 7 classes, you know that at some point...., they are going to encounter the people who have the same type of low experience or with the same type of low passion. It is just, "Come in here and sit down and be quiet; read this chapter." That's it. And when you know people who are like that, it motivates you to just say, OK. When we are doing professional development, we are going to focus on certain things. So it may mean going back to modify things in the classroom management.... to becoming an effective teacher. It gives you a chance to address those issues whereas, I cannot just go up to a teacher and say I know you are doing this. In a professional development setting, you have to bring in examples of your lessons. How do you know that your kids are learning? What am I teaching? How do I know that my students are understanding what I am teaching, as opposed to looking at a test score? And why am I looking at certain things? Why do we teach what we teach? And how do we know our kids are learning it? And so that allows us to be more reflective and then it empowers me to be more effective in the classroom. And so that whole thing of teaching for understanding, allows us to get at those issues. Now we can make real changes, because to say I covered chapters 1-5 doesn't mean that you know you taught anything. Or that the kids learned anything. So it is a way of shifting the philosophy. How do you know that your kids are learning what you are teaching? And that is something that you know or should know when placed in certain leadership roles. It's giving me

more responsibility, but it has empowered me to know that wherever I step, I can make an assessment of where we need to change certain things.

It is apparent that the principals in this study were successful in fostering an accepting and nurturing climate for teachers, which naturally transferred over into the classroom. The observations indicated that the environment in each school was certainly student-centered, and because principals held such high expectations from their teachers and staff, they also maintained those same high expectations for their students. While the climate in the schools were impressively very positive, all three schools reported problems maintaining positive relations with central administration, which is not unusual in the educational arena. As stated earlier, these are preliminary findings because the research is still ongoing. However, the study clearly indicated a positive, direct relationship between principal leadership styles and characteristics, and teacher empowerment.

REFERENCES

Creighton, T. (1996). *A construct validation of the Administrative Diagnostic Inventory.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. TM 027 024).

Edmonds, R. (1979). Some schools work and more can. *Social Policy*, 9: 28-32.

Fullan, M. (1982). *The meaning of educational change*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Hallinger, P., Bickman, L., and Davis K. (1996). School context, principal leadership, and student reading achievement. *Elementary School Journal*, 96(5): 527-540.

Leithwood, K. (1994). Leadership for school restructuring. *Educational Administration Quarterly,* 30(4): 498-518.

Levine, D.U. and Lezotte, L.W. (1996). Effective schools research. In J.A. Banks and C.A. McBee Banks (Eds.), *Handbook on research on multicultural education* (pp. 525-547). New York: Macmillan.

Miskel, C and Hoy, W. (2001). *Educational Administration: Theory, Research and Practice*. NY: McGraw-Hill.

Stringfield, S. and Herman, R. (1996). Assessment of the state of school effectiveness research in the United States of America. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 7: 159-180.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

ERIC Educational Resources Information Center

REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: Leadership Styles and Characteristics of Effective Principals in High Poverty Public Schools	
Author(s): Sheila T. Gregory, Ph.D.	
Corporate Source:	Publication Date:

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Level 1

☐

Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) *and* paper copy.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

Level 2A

☑

Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 2B

☐

Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only.

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign here, → please

Signature: Sheila T. Gregory	Printed Name/Position/Title: Sheila Gregory Associate Professor
Organization/Address: 550 Croydon Lane Alpharetta, GA 30022	Telephone: 770 360 9679 FAX: 404 [illegible]
	E-Mail Address: dr.sgregory@aol.com Date: 6-3-03

(Over)

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address: NA
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address: NA

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
1129 SHRIVER LAB
COLLEGE PARK, MD 20742-5701
ATTN: ACQUISITIONS

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
4483-A Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, Maryland 20706

Telephone: 301-552-4200
Toll Free: 800-799-3742
FAX: 301-552-4700
e-mail: ericfac@inet.ed.gov
WWW: http://ericfacility.org

EFF-088 (Rev. 2/2001)